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ABSTRACT

This paper examines the influence of the Internet on the French language from a predominantly sociolinguistic perspective, noting the main areas of debate between francophone businesses, governments, and "Institutions de la Francophonie," while considering theories of language in contact and language policy. It analyzes a number of arbitrarily-selected, current, France-based, francophone Web sites in order to ascertain the level of influence of Internet-specific, English technical terminology on the French language (neologisms and Anglicisms, types of Anglicism, semantic Anglicisms, lexical Anglicisms, and graphical Anglicisms). The paper identifies and isolates linguistic tendencies that may provide clues about the reasons for this influence, and it verifies the existence of concrete evidence to justify French Minister for Justice Jacques Toubon's 1997 statement, "The dominant usage of English on the Internet is a new form of colonization. If we do nothing, it will be too late [...] we will be colonized." Three appendixes present a database of Anglicisms, a database of acronyms, and a list of French sample Web sites. (Contains references including books, Web sites, and dictionaries). (SM)

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Centre for Language in Education

The Internet and the French Language

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Introduction

"*The dominant usage of English on the Internet is a new form of colonisation. If we do nothing it will be too late [...] we will be colonised.*" (Jacques Toubon, French Minister for Justice, 14th April 1997)

This statement can be considered the pivot around which the principal discussions of this paper will turn. Is there really adequate justification for such a statement? If so, how can colonisation be prevented? Is prevention actually possible?

The paper will be broadly divided into two sections. The first section will look at the influence of the Internet on the French language from a predominantly sociolinguistic perspective. This will investigate the main areas of debate between francophone businesses, governments and 'Institutions de la Francophonie' while considering theories of languages in contact and language policy.

The second section will analyse a number of current, France-based, francophone websites, selected arbitrarily, in order to ascertain the level of influence of Internet specific, English technical terminology on the French language. It will then attempt to identify and isolate linguistic tendencies which may provide clues as to the reasons for this influence, while at the same time verifying the existence of concrete evidence to justify the statement of Jacques Toubon above.

SECTION 1 – SOCIOLINGUISTIC ISSUES

1.1 Languages in Contact

1.1.1 French and English

Thomason (2001:6) points out that languages have been in contact since humans spoke more than one language which she proposes was very close to the beginning of humankind. She goes further to suggest that the linguistic results of language contact can be categorised under three headings, language change, extreme language mixture (resulting in Pidgins and Creoles) and language death. This paper investigates one of the most common factors contributing in particular to the first category: linguistic borrowing.

There exists incontrovertible evidence that the French and English languages have been, and indeed still are, in close contact with each other. Indeed, a high percentage of English words were borrowed from the French language after the Normans conquered England in 1066. However, around the middle of the 18th century the process reversed and English words began crossing the channel to enter the French language (Walter,1996:11). Since the later decades of the 20th century this phenomenon has accelerated – certain francophiles would say dangerously so – however their itinerary has changed. Now it seems the most important borrowings are coming from across the Atlantic Ocean.

The English language has enjoyed a remarkable odyssey over the last century since the dramatic increase in world political and economic might of the United States of America. This, combined with the strength of its demographic, base has allowed the English language to become the language of world communication. A more recent development has been the advent of the now quasi-omnipresent Internet which has brought the English language into 'virtual' contact with the majority of world languages, including of course French. The level of linguistic borrowing as a result of this contact has become an issue of great concern for a number of francophone institutions.

1.1.2 The Internet in Francophone Countries

Although the language of the Internet, HTML (HyperText Markup Language) was designed and developed by a Swiss francophone agency, the CERN (Centre Européen de la Recherche Nucleaire), the Internet itself was conceived during the 1960s by the US military agency ARPA (Advanced Research Projects Agency) during the cold war. It was designed to prevent a complete breakdown of communications in the event of a nuclear attack by interconnecting principal servers into a network which would enable information to be relayed even if one or more of the servers was knocked out (http://www.dei.isep.ipp.pt).

Since the origins of the Internet itself lie in America, all aspects of its design (protocols, interfaces and infrastructure) were originally aimed for the use of English and were not readily adaptable to other languages. This fact contributed greatly to an apparent tardiness of non-anglophone countries in adopting the network. With particular reference to the situation in France, three further reasons have often been considered as contributing factors: the 'Minitel', the French mentality and President Mittérrand.

The 'Minitel', introduced in 1982, was a demonstration of the economic and technological power of France at that time. Containing over 30,000 databases, allowing a variety of tasks to be carried out (from reserving plane tickets to consulting one's bank balance) and available in more than 6.5 million homes in France, the 'Minitel' was, in fact, a technological revolution. Paradoxically however, the inability to adapt the protocol of this system actually prevented the next stage in its development, the adoption of the Internet.

It has been argued that the very nature of the French mentality does not lend itself to the adoption of such an open, decentralised network system. French political structures are often considered to be closed, hierarchical and pyramidal. It seems that the French are suspicious of such an easy and open means to reach what they consider to be too much information as it goes against the centralist nature of French political culture. Jean-Marie Rausch, the Mayor of Metz (May 1998) indicated that: "*Even now*

we try, with just reason perhaps, to limit information because to respect Man and his liberty, it is essential that information is not too free."

However after the death of Mittérrand who considered the Internet simply as a *"fashionable anglo-saxon network"* (June 1995) the French government finally realised the commercial and academic potential of the Internet. They forged new alliances with politicians from Quebec (who incidentally had faced far fewer psychological challenges in adapting to the Internet) and invested considerably in the development of protocols that would allow the use of the French language. An extract from a mission statement to the French senate by President Chirac in March 1997 demonstrates this:

> *I would like you to analyse the consequences of this new information technology for communication on the evolution of our society in the near future, and propose measures to be taken in order to better prepare our future through the development of this technology.*

It seems that the measures taken have had a positive effect on the presence of the French language in 'cyber-space' as statistics from Infometre (2001) and Funredes (Association of Network Development, 2002) indicate. The absolute presence of French Internet pages has steadily increased from 2.81% in July 1998 to 4.66% in December 2002. This compares to a considerable decrease in the absolute presence of English pages which has fallen from 75% in July 1998 to 51% in December 2002. Interestingly and perhaps even more significantly the percentage of French people who would not subscribe to the Internet because of the presence of the English language has fallen from 35% in April 1997 to just 2% in April 2002.

Despite this positive evolution there are still great concerns by certain institutions regarding the impact of this still predominantly anglophonic Internet on the French language.

1.2 French Language Planning and Policy

The importance of French Language planning and policy in France has greatly increased over the course of the last quarter century with the introduction of the unsuccessful (Ball,1997:209) 75-1349 Law of the 31st December 1975 (known as the Bas-Lauriol law). This law "*imposed the compulsory, but non-exclusive, usage of the French language in specific fields in order to guarantee to the citizens the right to use their language on certain occasions in everyday life*" (www.globalvis.com). It was replaced by the 94-665 Law of the 4th August 1994 (known as the Toubon Law) which extended its field of application and reinforced its provisions. One important extension relates to operating procedures for application and operating system software which must be established in French.

With particular reference to the language of the Internet, it shall be demonstrated in the next section that the two principal dimensions of the framework for language planning defined by Kloss (1967 cited Mesthrie et al, 2000:385), corpus planning and status planning (including prestige planning), have both been important considerations for the French government. However it seems that a further dimension can be added to the framework for this particular instance; for the purposes of this assignment this shall be named technology planning.

1.2.1 Internet and 'La Francophonie'

The birth and development of a large amount of new technology, including the Internet, in the United States has led to many neologisms being created in English. It appears that a further obstacle in the francisation of the Internet was the difficulty faced by French web designers in finding appropriate terminology to allocate to concepts invented in English. Several organisations, supported by the French and Canadian governments, have invested resources in order to overcome this obstacle. They offer translations which are available to the general public through the Internet.

Even though the Internet is widely considered to be a threat to the French language, it is clear that its impact has actually strengthened links between francophonic countries by provoking a fight against a common enemy. In the translated words of Louise

Beaudoin, the Minister for Culture and Communications in Quebec (3 June 1996): *"Since last autumn a formidable co-operation has been created. Quebec has become France's most important partner in the domain of information networks, even before European countries. The first meetings have allowed the signature of several important agreements".*

The agreements between the two countries have led to the conception of an important project, '*Francophonie* and the challenge of new technology'. The origins of this project lie in a speech by Philippe Douste-Blazy, French Minister for Culture on the 2nd May 1996 who addressed the 'High Council of Francophonie' regarding methods of improving the representation of the French language and culture on the Internet. His speech highlighted the need for the development of three principal areas:

- Technology Planning

Douste-Blazy realised the importance of removing any technological obstacles which may impede the presence and successful diffusion of the French language on the network.

- Status Planning (including prestige planning)

According to Picone (1996) one of the traditional arguments for linguistic borrowing is the attraction of what he calls 'prestige forms'. Etiemble (1964) calls this a type of 'snobbism' which currently is particularly prevalent vis-à-vis American English. It has therefore also been recognised that the French contents of the Internet should express the richness and originality of the francophonic culture in order to avoid economic and cultural marginalisation of further generations of French speakers.

- Corpus Planning

Douste-Blazy affirmed that the French Language must possess all the words and expressions to express new concepts in the domain of science and technology.

These objectives reflected the opinion of President Chirac who called upon the 'Francophonie' to head a vast campaign for linguistic pluralism and cultural diversity on the information networks. As a result several 'Institutions de la Francophonie' were given the task of applying this new strategy.

1.2.2 'Institutions de la Francophonie'

The 'Institutions de la Francophonie' were well aware of the linguistic threat that the information highways represented. However the majority of them considered that the French language had the necessary critical mass to not only guarantee its survival, but also to promote a considerable increase in use, as long as sufficient effort was spent in the francisation of these new communication channels (www.culture.fr).

Having succeeded in developing technical protocols that would enable French characters to be displayed, the priority of the institutions became the production of a French lexicon to communicate the necessary concepts. Unfortunately the lack of co-operation and co-ordination between the different organisations led to an abundance of different lexicons to describe the same concept (for example, translations for the word *browser* – navigateur, explorateur, fureteur, lectoir, feuilleteur, broutage (discussion group france_langue). Therefore the questions arose as to which of the terms most accurately described the concept and how to actually choose an official term.

While the Francophones of Canada accepted propositions from all institutions, France displayed its centralist nature again by assigning the principal role to the Délégation à la Langue Française (DGLF). The DGLF worked and continues to work with a number of other 'Francophonie' institutions; among them *l'Académie Française, le Conseil Supérieur de la langue française, l'Avenir de la langue française (The Future of the French Language), la Défense de la langue française, le Droit de Comprendre (The Right to Understand), le Chapitre Français de l'Internet Society and l'Agence de la Francophonie* (www.culture.fr), in order to:

- Encourage French speaking organisations to set themselves up on the Internet,
- Promote the use of information highways as a means of communication among French-speaking institutions,
- Promote the quality of the French language used on the Internet,
- Ensure that judicial legislation concerning the presence of the French language on the Internet is respected.

1.2.3 Judicial Legislation

The omnipresent nature of the Internet and the difficulty in centralising international order implies that the network has developed in an almost non-existent legal framework. This fact has caused a number of sociological and anthropological problems relating to the abuse of the system, subjects beyond the scope of this essay. However the reality that the Internet is effectively beyond the law has created important discussions of a linguistic nature.

It has been said that "*In France, language is an affair of the State*" (Toubon, 1994). This has undoubtedly become more and more the case over the last few decades as the French language has lost more and more of its importance as a global language as a result of the increasing importance of the English language. This development has been the cause of some concern for the French government and has led to legislation both to defend the French language from the influx of anglicisms and to ensure the diffusion of the French language around the world.

As mentioned earlier, the fundamental law relating to the use of the French language is the Bas-Lauriol law (1975) which was replaced by the current Toubon Law (1994). Article 2 of the latter law has been related to the use of English on the Internet as it stipulates that the use of French is obligatory when presenting any offer, product or service. Furthermore this article highlights that this law also applies in the case of audio-visual advertising. How far this actually extends to the design of Internet pages was the fundamental issue behind a historic event in the history of 'la Francophonie' that occurred in December 1996.

A year previously The Body Shop had lost a lawsuit pertaining to the infraction of the 'Toubon Law' because it had not translated its product labels into French. The plaintiff acted on issues of health and safety contained within the French Consumer Protection Act and, as a result, the Body Shop was obliged to translate all its labels into French (www.globalvis.com). 'Francophonie' had therefore won an important battle for the cause of the French language. This success seemed to fuel the institutions and in December 1996, an American school in Metz, Georgia Tech Lorraine, whose website was only available in English, was taken to court by the

'Défense de la langue française' and the 'Avenir de la langue française' for breaking the 'Toubon Law'. Under this law the school could have faced fines of up to Ffr20,000 (US$ 2,500) for every time an English-only page was accessed. Marceau Déchamps (1997), administrator for the 'Défense de la Langue Française' asserted that "*As a citizen, I find it totally abnormal that only information in English is at the disposal of the French. One would think that the French, in France, must speak English*". However the school remained firm in its opinion, convinced that "*the Toubon Law doesn't concern the Internet, an international network of a different nature to a classical audio-visual network. If there is a voluntary act on the part of the person requesting information from a server then there is a contractual relationship. It is therefore unlike turning on the television*". Unfortunately the decision of this tribunal was never clarified and the court did not mention if the law had been violated simply because it refused the case on technical grounds. Georgia Tech Lorraine did however add multilingual translations to its website soon after the court case was completed.

Until present no further cases have taken place and but it seems that the result of the Georgia Tech Lorraine case has dissuaded a large number of French companies from continuing to use English only in their websites. However the extent to which this tendency has prevented lexical borrowing and language change is questionable. As Delaporte (1976) pointed out soon after the introduction of the Bas-Lauriol Law "*Threats of fines can not modify the evolution of a language*".

It is clear that the Internet has opened many doors to sociolinguistic debates in the Francophone world. However the question remains as to the real extent of the effect of the Internet on the French language. The next section therefore aims to isolate examples of Internet specific English terminology used in French websites in France and classify them into linguistic categories. This is carried out with a view to identifying tendencies that may give clues as to the fundamental reasons for these linguistic borrowings.

SECTION 2 – LINGUISTIC ISSUES

This section represents a presentation and analysis of anglicisms discovered in twenty-three French websites accessed between the 10th of December 2002 and the 18th of January 2003. This study managed to isolate more than one hundred and fifty different examples of linguistic borrowing but recognises that this list is by no means exhaustive. This section will begin by defining 'neologisms' and 'anglicisms' and continue with a presentation of the salient trends found among the examples discovered.

2.1 Neologisms and Anglicisms

The term *neologism* originates from the Greek words Neos (new) and logos (word) and therefore means the appearance of a new word in a language. "*Science and technology neologisms result from the need to give a particular name to new concepts. Regarding their form, neologisms essentially take two, either they are totally new creations or they are borrowed from other languages*" (Sager, 1990:79-80). Picone (1996) informs us that linguistic borrowing is fundamentally a mixture of two languages with an attempt to reproduce models from one language in another language. This phenomenon may come from one or more linguistic or social sources such as bilingualism, a lack of necessary terms in the borrowing language, or the prestige of the source language.

It is important to define what is meant by an anglicism, an area that also proves to be a subject of some debate. However, given the strict word limitation, this essay will not explore this area too deeply and will content itself with the simple definition: an English word, a series of English words or an English structure used in a French text. The author is aware of possible ambiguity in this definition but feels that it is essentially sufficient for this assignment.

The creation of neologisms generally takes place in a particular context. Information technology (and by the same definition, the Internet) is well known as being a context in which a large number of anglicisms are created. It is interesting to note that in terms of the part of speech of the examples found in data gathering 80% were nouns,

15% verbs, 2.2% adjectives, 0.6% phrases, 0.6% conjunctions and 0.6% prepositions. The abundance of verbs and nouns seems to originate from the introduction of new concepts that did not exist before the introduction of the Internet.

2.2 Types of Anglicism

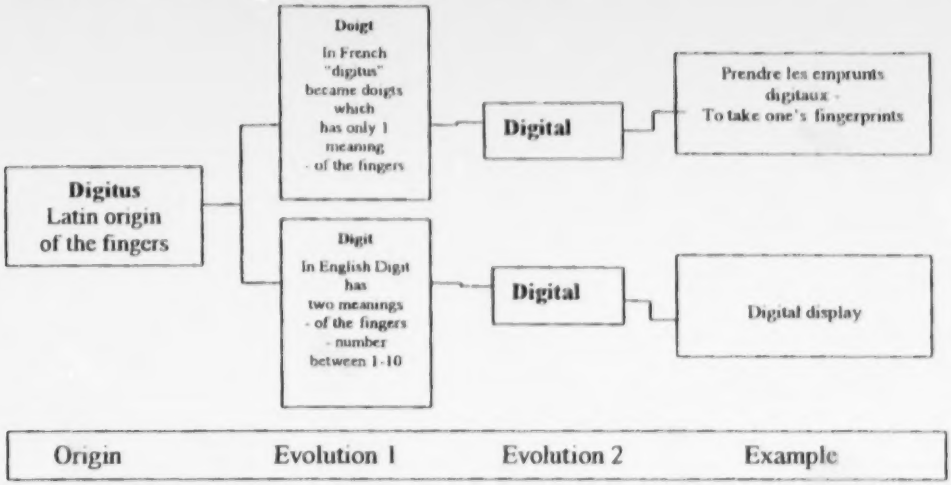
Anglicism specialists such as Pergnier (1989) and Picone (1996) have classified six main types of anglicism, namely semantic, lexical, syntactic, graphical, morphological and phonetic. It was noticed during the data analysis that the majority of the anglicisms found fall into the categories of lexical (80%) and semantic (14%) borrowings (syntactic and graphic represented 3.5% and 2.5% respectively) and that there were no examples of morphological or phonetic anglicisms. The fact that this is not in accordance with the tendency of anglicisms in general (31% lexical, 29% semantic, 15% morphological, 15% graphical and 10% syntactic - Le Colpron, 1994) may again demonstrate the need to give terms to new concepts in this particular domain.

2.2.1 Semantic Anglicisms

Colpron (1994) gives semantic anglicisms (otherwise known as semantic calque – Picone, 1996:p4) two distinct definitions. Firstly, they are words that are similar in both languages but are used incorrectly with the English meaning. Secondly, they are expressions created from French words through literal translation of an English expression. 14% of the anglicisms found fall into the category of semantic anglicisms.

a) French words used with English meaning

Mainly of Latin origin, these words have evolved differently in the two languages in question. It is often the case that these words are monosemic in French but polysemic in English. Given that IT specialists are rarely linguists, they may have blindly welcomed this incorrect usage which has now become accepted. The example below demonstrates the evolution of a semantic anglicism.



The table below contains other similar semantic anglicisms that appear in the French websites. The origins and definitions of the words are paraphrased from The Oxford Library of Words and Phrases, Volume III. Word Origins, (1986) and Le nouveau dictionnaire étymologique et historique Larousse, 1984.

Origin	Incorrect meaning (English)	French meaning	Official Term (DGLF)
Ordinateur portable (n) (laptop computer)			
Latin-Portare	That which can be carried (by hand).	That which can be worn (clothing).	ordinateur portatif
Mémoire cache (n) (cache memory)			
Greek-Kruptos	Preliminary memory	A place where one can hide something (cacher-to hide).	antémémoire
Scanner (vt), scanneur (n) , scannérisé (adj) (to scan, scanner, scanned)			
Latin-Scandere	Reproduce point by point.	Medical term to scan the body.	numériser (numérisé)
Circuler (v), circulation (n) (to circulate information)			
Latin-Circulare	To put at the disposition of the public.	1. Movement of a fluid in a circuit. 2. Movement of a vehicle on a road.	diffuser (diffusion)
Facilité (n) (facility)			
Latin-Facilis	Installation	Something easy to do	Installation

Clé (n) (key)

Latin-Clavis	Key on a keyboard	1. That which is used to open (door key) 2. That which is used to understand (answer key)	Touche

Poster (v) (to post)

Latin-Ponere	Advertise with posters	1. To put in the post 2. To assign a post to a soldier	afficher

Connecter (v) (to connect)

Latin-conectere	Connect to the main network.	Join using a connection	brancher

Although these examples may be affecting the French language, as shall be demonstrated it seems that they are less premeditated than other types of anglicism. As mentioned earlier, IT specialists are rarely linguists and would probably be surprised to discover that these examples were based on an anglophonic etymological development.

b) Literal Translation of the English Expression

The second type of semantic anglicism, perhaps more premeditated and therefore possibly more damaging to the French language refers to the literal translation of an English expression.

- **A date** is a calque of *up to date*. Official form (DGLF): **à jour**.
- **En association avec** is a calque of *in association with*. Official form (DGLF): **en colloboration avec.**
- **Nom de domaine total** is a calque of *Total qualified domain name*. Official form (DGLF): **nom de domaine complet.**
- **Moteur de recherche** is a calque of *search engine*. Official form (DGLF): **outil de recherche.**

2.2.2 Lexical Anglicisms

A lexical anglicism, according to Colpron (1994) can be defined as an English word or lexical chunk used either without modification or with a French ending. Lexical anglicisms make up some 80% of those discovered related to the Internet. This may not only be due to the need to provide a linguistic sign for a newly created concept but also because "*The more lexical the item, the more appropriate it is for borrowing.*" (Picone, 1996:10)

Although it has been seen that 'la Francophonie' has taken strong steps to create equivalent French neologisms, there still appears to be a large number of signs which continue to be borrowed from English. This section attempts to identify the reasoning behind this phenomenon in order to establish how far this incorrect usage is premeditated. Upon close inspection of the numerous examples found, a salient tendency was identified relating to the considerable difference in concision of the English terms. The table below demonstrates this:

English	Letters	Syllables	French	Letters	Syllables
backup	6	2	copie de sécurité	15	7
CD-R	3	3	disque optique compact vierge prêt à être gravé	40	12
download	8	2	télédéchargement	16	6
emailbot	8	4	gestionnaire automatique de courrier électronique	45	15
hotspot	7	2	point d'ancrage	13	3
junkmail	8	2	publicité importune	18	7
laptop	6	2	ordinateur portatif	18	7
newsgroup	9	2	groupe de discussion	18	5

Since the Internet is a written medium used very often in a commercial context, time factors and the law of least effort are likely to be of capital importance. These factors may have strong repercussions as much on the isolated cases above as in a multitude of other cases (See Appendix A for more details). It is often the case that the official term proposed by the DGLF is significantly longer than the anglicism. It is important

now to consider which particular aspect of the English language enables the creation of concise but accurate neologisms.

The English language does, in fact, possess a number of useful resources which enable the production of succinct neologisms. The most frequently used in the context of the Internet are compound terms, derivation and acronyms.

a) **Compound Terms**

Compound terms refer to the merging of two or more existing terms to create a new word. The English Internet related vocabulary is rich in examples of this procedure which, given their concision, have been introduced without modification into the corresponding French vocabulary. However the 'Institutions de la Francophonie' have been quick to propose French equivalents which generally fall into five principal categories.

i) Noun+Preposition+Noun (Juxtaposition Neology, Picone, 1996:34)

These examples appear to be the most frequent and tend to separate the concepts in the original English term and reformulate them using new collocations of existing French terms. The obvious loss of concision can be seen in the examples below:

English Term	"DGLF" Term	Length Difference
Antivirus	vérificateur de virus	9 letters to 19 letters
Backup	copie de sécurité	6 letters to 15 letters
Checkbox	case à cocher	9 letters to 11 letters
Checklist	liste de pointage	9 letters to 15 letters
Homepage	page d'accueil	8 letters to 12 letters
Hotlist	liste de signets	7 letters to 14 letters
Hotspot	point d'ancrage	7 letters to 13 letters
Joystick	manche à balai	8 letters to 12 letters
Login	début de session	5 letters to 14 letters
Webmaster	maître du web	9 letters to 11 letters

ii) Hyphen usage (Binomial Construction, Picone, 1996:117)

The examples in this category separate the concepts in the original word and juxtapose them with a hyphen. Interestingly, the part of speech of the two words may differ but the resulting compound term always appears to be a masculine noun. Again it is clear that the concision of the original English term is superior to the translation.

English Term	"DGLF" Term	Comments
Edutainment	ludo-éducatif	The term ludo does not exist independently (latin origin). Furthermore the play on words of the English term is lost in the translation.
Firewall	coupe-feu	Verb + noun maintaining the same image as the English word.
Freephone	libre-appel	Adjective + noun
Infotainment	divertissement-instructif	Noun + adjective

iii) Two terms back to back (Binomial Construction, Picone, 1996:117)

Similar to the two previous methods of neologism creation, the examples in this category separate the concepts of the original word. The difference however is that the two words are not joined by a hyphen or by a preposition. Note the length difference of the French term.

English Term	DGLF Term	Length Difference
Background	arrière plan	10 letters to 10 letters
Bandwidth	bande passante	9 letters to 13 letters
Crosspost	envoi multiple	9 letters to 13 letters
Cybercash	argent électronique	9 letters to 18 letters
Dialup	appel téléphonique	6 letters to 17 letters
Junkmail	publicité importune	8 letters to 18 letters
Laptop	ordinateur portatif	6 letters to 18 letters
Notebook	ordinateur bloc-notes	8 letters to 19 letters

iv) Introduction of a Neologism in French

In several cases the official DGLF term is a French neologism created by a similar method as those in English. Through the imitation of this method it seems that both the concision and the incisive style of the term can be maintained. The creation of neologisms by traditional Francophone institutions using this characteristically English method may imply that the damage caused to the French language may go beyond the level of vocabulary, reaching a deeper linguistic level.

English Term	"DGLF" Term	Comments
Chatroom	bavardoir	Use of the word bavarder (to chat) with the suffix –oir
Cyberspace	cyberespace	Almost an anglicism
Freenet	libertel	libre (free) + tel
Freeware	gratuiciel	gratuit (free) + logiciel (software)
Megabyte	megaoctet	Although curiously the DGLF does not accept the term *gigaoctet* (gigabyte). Official term: *milliard d'octets* (a billion bytes).
Multitask	multitâche	Multi + tâche (task)
Netsurfer	internaute	
Shareware	partagiciel	partager (share) + logiciel (software)

v) Use of an existing term in French

In several cases the French turn to their own existing vocabulary in order to find equivalents for the English terms.

English Term	"DGLF" Term
bookmark	signet
deadline	échéance
gateway	passerelle
hardware	matériel
software	logiciel

b) Derivation

Derivation can be defined as the addition of an affix to an existing word and is another useful tool for the creation of neologisms. On close inspection of the French language, it is difficult not to be struck by one particular suffix which has caused great concern amongst the 'Institutions de la Francophonie' – the infamous '-ING'.

Certain linguists categorise the '-ing' anglicisms under the rubric of morphological neologisms (Trecases, 1988) because they adopt morphological characteristics of the English language. However, in this context, they are considered lexical because they are direct borrowings from the English nomenclature and are not morphological modifications of an existing French term. Some examples are contained in the table below:

English Term	"DGLF" Term	Comments
benchmarking	test de performance	Often used in a marketing context
brainstorming	remue-méninges	Often used in a marketing context
browsing	navigation	
downsizing	micromisation	creation of a neologism in French
internetting	interréseautique	creation of a neologism in French
loading	chargement	
mailing	publipostage	Often used in a marketing context
posting	envoi	
routing	acheminement	
sampling	échantillonage	
spamming	multipostage excessif	English image from Monty Python is lost in translation

c) Acronyms

In the domain of information technology it is frequently the case that terms or expressions are shortened using acronyms. It seems from the data that the English language is more disposed to the creation of acronyms than the French language which expresses the same concepts in four different ways.

i) The French equivalent translated by a different acronym:

DPI (dots per inch) becomes **PPP** (points par pouce).

ii) The English acronym is replaced by a French definition:

HTML (hypertext markup language) becomes **langage hypertext**

iii) The English acronym untranslated:

URL (uniform resource locator) remains **URL**

iv) The French equivalent retains the acronym and adds a new composition:

FTP (file transfer protocole) becomes **telecharger par FTP**

Although it seems impossible to identify the reasoning behind the option chosen, it is possible, from the examples found, to quantify the number of acronyms in each category. (See Appendix B for more details). From the sample 18% fell into category (i), 52% in category (ii), 19% in category (iii) and 11% in category (iv). It is therefore evident that despite the importance of acronyms in the English language, their influence is avoided in most cases in French, revealing a further example of the failure of the French language to obey the law of least effort.

2.2.3 Graphical anglicisms

Representing only 3.5% of the examples found in the French websites, graphical anglicisms are French words written in an English form. Examples of this are **site mirroir** instead of **site miroir**, **color** instead of **couleur**, **connection** in the place of **connexion** and **clicker** instead of **cliquer**. These examples may be simply the result of orthography problems rather than the acceptance of an English form into the French language.

2.2.4 Syntactic Anglicisms

The two examples of syntactic anglicisms discovered have actually been the subject of some unresolved philosophical debate among Francophone academics. Whether these two areas of debate are distracting certain linguists from the 'real' threat is a another question.

The first debate concerns the use of the definite article before the term 'Internet'. It has been argued that 'Internet' is a proper noun, since it is unique, and therefore does not need a definite article. However others argue on the contrary, insisting that because 'Internet' is not a brand it should be considered as a common noun, therefore not taking a definite article. In an article published in Le Monde (17th March 1999), the author goes further to say that it is a political debate between the language purists and the 'cyberaristocracy' (article) against the people (no article), a classic opposition between usage and rule. The Office Québécois de la Langue Française (www.olf.gouv.ca) apparently accepts both prepositions whereas the DGLF only officially recognises 'Internet' as a proper noun with no definite article.

The second debate relates to which preposition should precede 'Internet' (or indeed the Internet). Linguists are divided between sur Internet (on) or dans Internet (in). The reasoning behind this debate is based around metaphoric image. Since it is common to *surf* or *navigate* on the Internet this evokes an image of the sea, therefore demanding the use of the preposition *sur* (on). However since we talk about cyberspace it is normal for French speakers to navigate *dans* (in) space. Again, the Office Québécois de la Langue Française accepts both prepositions whereas the DGLF only officially recognises 'dans Internet'.

CONCLUSION

"The dominant usage of English on the Internet is a new form of colonisation. If we do nothing it will be too late [...] we will be colonised." (Jacques Toubon, French Minister for Justice, 14th April 1997)

This investigation into the effects of the Internet on the French language seems to have raised more questions than it has actually answered. However it has been demonstrated that Internet related anglicisms are indeed regularly finding their way into French websites despite the language policy measures taken by Francophone governments and institutions. From the research, it could be argued that the reasons for this phenomenon are threefold.

Firstly, the anglophonic origins of the Internet have resulted in the creation of many original neologisms in English causing them to become ingrained into the world Internet nomenclature. Secondly, the ability of the English Language to create concise, flexible neologisms allows compliance with the law of least effort. This is in contrast with French which has often been criticised for its rigidity. A metaphoric quotation from the turn of the century demonstrates this. Likening French to the severe and formal gardens of Louis XIV, Otto Jesperten (1905 cited Bryson 1990:131) contrasted it with English which he said was *"laid out seemingly without any definite plan, and in which you are allowed to walk everywhere according to your own fancy without having to fear a stern keeper enforcing rigourous regulations"*. Finally, an important reason is surely related to the prestige of English as an increasingly global language. The combination of these reasons would suggest that the apprehensions of Francophiles such as Jacques Toubon are justified to a certain extent.

The question however remains to be answered: is the French language realistically in a position to combat these Internet anglicisms? The amount of resources invested in this cause by the francophone governments would indicate that they strongly believe that it can. It is possible that their reasoning regarding the seemingly limited effects of language policy is that firstly the Internet is still in the embryonic stages of its

development and secondly that language change generally occurs over considerable periods of time.

If the francophone institutions continue to put pressure on French organisations whose websites are only in English, persevere with the development of new, more concise equivalent neologisms and, perhaps more importantly, persist in attempts to increase the presence and prestige of the French language on the Internet, it may be that Internet page designers will not only want to use the French language more but also to use it correctly. However if this development does not occur it might well be argued by academics in the future that the introduction and consolidation of Internet anglicisms actually represented a natural evolution of the French language.

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APPENDIX A – DATABASE OF ANGLICISMS

Incorrect Term	DGLF Term	P of S	Type
à date	à jour	adj	semantic
aborter	abandonner	verb	lexical
antivirus (m)	vérificateur de virus (m)	noun	lexical
article follow-up (m)	suivi d'article (m)	noun	lexical
attachment (m)	annexe (f)	noun	semantic
background (m)	arrière plan (image)/tâche de fond	noun	lexical
backup (m)	copie de sécurite (f)	noun	lexical
bandwidth (m)	bande passante (f)	noun	lexical
benchmark (m)	jalon (m)	noun	lexical
benchmarking (m)	test de performance (m)	noun	lexical
beta release (m)	version beta (f)	noun	lexical
bookmark (m)	signet (m)	noun	lexical
boot (m)	démarrage (m)/amorce (f)	noun	lexical
brainstorming (m)	remue-méninges (m)	noun	lexical
broadcast (m)	diffusion (f)	noun	lexical
browser	naviguer	verb	lexical
browser (m)	navigateur (m)/ visualiseur (m)/	noun	lexical
bug (m)	bogue (f)/erreur (f)	noun	lexical
byte (m)	octet (m)	noun	lexical
cache memory (f)	antémémoire (f)	noun	semantic
canceller	annuler	verb	lexical
CD-R (m)	disque optique compact vierge	noun	lexical
CDROM (m)	disque optique compact (m)	noun	lexical
chat	bavarder / causer	verb	lexical
chatroom (m)	bavardoir (m)	noun	lexical
check	cocher	verb	lexical
checkbox (m)	case à cocher (f)	noun	lexical
circulation (f)	diffusion (f)	noun	semantic
circuler	diffuser	verb	semantic
cle (f)	touche (f)	noun	semantic
click (m)	clic/clique (m)	noun	graphical
code (régional) (m)	indicatif régional (m)	noun	semantic
color (f)	couleur (f)	noun	lexical
compresser	compacter	verb	lexical
computer (m)	ordinateur (m)	noun	lexical
connecter	brancher	verb	semantic
connection	connexion	noun	graphical
cookie (m)	fichier de témoin (m)	noun	lexical
copie (f)	exemplaire (m)	noun	semantic
crash (m)	arrêt fatal du système (m)	noun	lexical
crasher	planter	verb	lexical
cryptage (m)	chiffrement (m)	noun	semantic
crypter	chiffrer	verb	semantic
cut and paste	couper et coller	verb	lexical
cyberart (m)	art éléctronque (m)	noun	lexical
cyberculture (m)	culture cyber (f)(cyberculture)	noun	lexical
cyberspace (m)	cyberespace (m)	noun	lexical
d.p.i. (dots per inch)	p.p.p. (points par pouce)	adj	lexical
deadline (m)	échéance (f)	noun	lexical

descrambling (m)	désembrouillage (m)	noun	lexical
dial-up (m)	appel téléphonique (m)	noun	lexical
digital(e)	numérique	adj	semantic
display (m)	affichage (m)	noun	lexical
download (m)	télédéchargement (m)	noun	lexical
downsize	réduire/micromiser	verb	lexical
downsizing (m)	micromisation (f)	noun	lexical
driver (m)	pilote (m)	noun	lexical
dump	clicher	verb	lexical
e-mail/email (m)	courrier/message électronique	noun	lexical
édutainment (m)	ludo-éducatif (m)	noun	lexical
emailbot (m)	gestionnaire automatique de	noun	lexical
en association avec	en collaboration avec	conj	semantic
encryptage (m)	chiffrement (m)	noun	lexical
encrypter	chiffrer	verb	lexical
facilite (f)	installation (f)	noun	semantic
faire un backup	sauvegarder (f)	verb	lexical
feed-back (m)	commentaires (mpl)	noun	lexical
firewall (m)	coupe-feu (m)	noun	lexical
flame	flamber/flinguer	verb	lexical
font (m)	police (f)	noun	lexical
forum (m)	groupe d'intérêt (m)	noun	lexical
frame (m)	cadre (m)	noun	lexical
freenet (m)	libertel (?)	noun	lexical
freephone (m)	libre-appel (m)	noun	lexical
freeware (m)	gratuiciel (m), logiciel gratuit (m)	noun	lexical
FTPer	télécharger par FTP	verb	lexical
gateway (m)	passerelle (f)	noun	lexical
gigaoctet (m)	milliard d'octets (m)	noun	lexical
groupware (m)	collecticiel (m)	noun	lexical
hang up	raccrocher	verb	lexical
hardware (m)	matériel (m)	noun	lexical
header (m)		noun	lexical
highlighter	sélectionner	verb	lexical
homepage (m)	page d'accueil (f)	noun	lexical
hotlist (m)	liste de signets (f)	noun	lexical
hotspot (m)	point d'ancrage (m), zone	noun	lexical
image cliquable (f)	image hypertexte (f)	noun	lexical
image map (m)	carte sensible/hyperimage (f)	noun	lexical
index (m)	sommaire (m)	noun	semantic
infotainment (m)	divertissement instructif (m)	noun	lexical
internaute (m/f))	internaute (m/f)	noun	lexical
internet/l'internet	Internet	noun	morph
item (m)	élément (m)	noun	lexical
joystick (m)	manche à balai (m)	noun	lexical
joystick (m)	manche à balai (m)	noun	lexical
jumpsite (m)	site escale (m)	noun	lexical
junk mail (m)	publicité importune (f)	noun	lexical
killfile (m)	programme-torpille (m)	noun	lexical
laptop (m)	ordinateur portatif (m)	noun	lexical
loading (m)	chargement (m)	noun	lexical
logger	brancher	verb	lexical

login	brancher	verb	lexical
login (m)	début de session (m)	noun	lexical
logoff	débrancher	verb	lexical
logoff (m)	fin de session (f)	noun	lexical
mailing (m)	publipostage (m)	noun	lexical
mailing list (m)	liste de diffusion (f)	noun	lexical
manager (m)	gestionnaire (m/f)	noun	lexical
membership (m)	adhesion (f)	noun	lexical
moteur de recherche (m)	outil de recherche/infobot	noun	semantic
mousemat (m)	tapis de souris (m)	noun	lexical
multitask (m)	multitache (f)	noun	lexical
newsgroup	groupe de discussion	noun	lexical
nom de domaine totalement qualifié (m)	nom de domaine complet (m)	noun	semantic
on-line	en-ligne	adj	lexical
overview (m)	aperçu (m)	noun	lexical
patch (m)	rustine / correction (f)	noun	lexical
patcher	rustiner / corriger	verb	lexical
pinger	pas d'équivalence	verb	lexical
plug-in (m)	module externe/module	noun	lexical
polling (m)	invitation à emettre (f)	noun	lexical
portable	portatif	adj	semantic
poster	afficher	verb	semantic
posting (m)	envoi (m)	noun	lexical
postmaster (m)	postier (m)	noun	lexical
prompt (m)	invite (m)	noun	lexical
proxy (m)	serveur (m)	noun	lexical
rebooter	relancer	verb	lexical
release (m)	révision (f)/ version (f)	noun	lexical
routing (m)	acheminement (m)	noun	lexical
sample (m)	échantillon (m)	noun	lexical
sampling (m)	échantillonnage (m)	noun	lexical
scanne (m)	copie numerisee (f)	noun	semantic
scoller	faire défiler	verb	lexical
scrambling (m)	embrouillage (m)	noun	lexical
scrolling (m)	défilement (m)	noun	lexical
se plugger à	se brancher à	verb	lexical
shareware (m)	partagiciel (m)	noun	lexical
signature Internet (f)	signature électronique (f)	noun	semantic
site connecte (m)	site internet (m)	noun	faute
site mirroir	site miroir	noun	graphique
smiley (m)	binette (f)	noun	lexical
software (m)	logiciel (m)	noun	lexical
spamming (m)	multipostage excessif (m)	noun	lexical
start-up (m)	démarrage (m)	noun	lexical
sur Internet	dans Internet	prép	syntactic
surfer	naviguer	verb	lexical
upgrade (m)	évolution d'un systeme (f)	noun	lexical
uploader	exporter	verb	lexical
upsize	développer	verb	lexical
vaporware (m)	logiciel éphémère (m)	noun	lexical
webmaster (m)	maître du Web/webmestre (m)	noun	lexical
WYSIWYG	tel écran, tel écrit	phrase	lexical

APPENDIX B – DATABASE OF ACRONYMS

Existing Acronym	Official Term	TYPE
ACD (Automatic Call Distributor)	Distributeur d'appels automatique	B
AIFF (Apple Interchange File Format)	AIFF	C
AOL (America On-Line)	Les Etats-Unis en ligne	B
API (Application Programming Interface)	Interface pour la programmation d'applications	B
ASCII (American Standard Code Info Interchange)	ASCII	C
BBS (Bulletin Board System)	BABEL (BABaillard Electronique)	A
BCD (Binary Coded Decimal)	DCB (Décimal Codé Binaire)	A
BTW (By The Way)	À propos	B
CD-R (Compact Disk Recordable)	Disque optique compact prêt à être gravé	B
CGI type (Common Gateway Interface)	Interface de passerelle commune	B
DNS (Domain Name Server)	Serveur de nom de domain	B
DPI (Dots Per Inch)	PPP (points par pouce)	A
E-mail (Electronic)	Courrier electronique	B
EDI (Electronic Data Exchange)	Echange de données électroniques	B
FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions)	FAQ (Foire aux Questions)	A
FTP (File Transfer Protocol)	Télécharger par FTP	D
FTPer	Télécharger par FTP	D
FWIW (For What It's Worth)	Pour ce que ça vaut	B
FYI (For Your Information)	PVI (pour votre information)	A
GIF (Graphics Interchange Format)	GIF	C
GUI (Graphics User Interface)	Interface Utilisateur Graphique	B
HTML (Hyper Text Markup Language)	Langage hypertext	B
HTTP (Hyper Text Transfer Protocol)	HTTP	C
ID (identification)	Identification	B
IP address (Internet Protocol)	Adresse IP	D
IR (Internet Registry)	Service d'Enregistrement d'Internet	B
IRC (Internet Relay Chat)	Conversations relayées dans Internet	B
JPEG (Joint Photographic Expert Group)	JPEG	C
LAN (Local Area Network)	Réseau local	B
MAN (Metropolitan Area Network)	RAME (Réseau d'Aire Metropolitaine)	A
MIDI (Musical Instruments Digital Interface)	MIDI	C
MIME (Multipurpose Internet Mail Extension)	Extensions MIME	D
MODEM (MODulator DEModulator)	MODEM	C
MPEG (Motion Pictures Expert Group)	MPEG	C
PDF (Portable Document File)	PDF	C
PEM (Privacy Enhanced Mail)	Courrier sécurisé	B
POP (Post Office Protocol)	Protocole de bureau de poste	B
PPP (Point to Point Protocol)	Protocole de point-à-point	B
RTFM (Read the F%$kung Manual)	RTFM (Reporte-Toi aux F%$tu Manuel)	A
SLIP (Serial Line Internet Protocol)	Protocol Internet de ligne série	B
SNMP (Simple Networks Management Protocol)	Protocol de gestion du réseau	B
TCP/IP (Transmission Control Protocol)	Protocol TCP/IP	D
URL (Uniform Resource Locator)	Localisateur uniforme de ressources	B
WAIS (Wide Area Information Search)	Serveur d'information à vaste zone	B
WWW (World Wide Web)	W3	A
WYSIWYG (What You See Is What You Get)	Tel écran, tel écrit	B

APPENDIX C – LIST OF FRENCH SAMPLE WEBSITES

Page	URL	Anglicisms
Gainsborough Online	www.gainsborough.com/gui3000_flyer_french.htm	Clicker, cut and paste, logon, input, browser.
Benchmarking	http://www.sudqualite.org/documents/mementos/Benchmarking/bench.htm	Benchmarking, checkbox, deadline.
2001 Webmaster	http://www.2001webmaster.com/	Webmaster, connecter, image cliquable, laptop, download.
Harissa	http://www.harissa.com/chatroom.htm	Chatroom, copyright, computer.
L'Escale	http://www.handicap-international.org/escale/exemple.html	Email, item, homepage, bookmark, newsgroup.
Freeware Heaven	http://www.frheaven.com/	Freeware, RAM, FTP, CD-R, antivirus, cryptage, index, uploader, multitask.
Anneau Français du shareware	http://www.sharedif.com/sharering/	Shareware, color, digital, encryptage, code.
Infos du Net	http://www.infosdunet.firstream.net/modules/news/index.php	Hardware, mouse, chat, facilité, compresser.
MNIS France	http://www.mnis.fr/home/logiciel.LaccelX.htm	Portable, CD-ROM, hotlist, driver, hotspot.
Zikinf	http://www.zikinf.com/sampler.php	Sampling, webmaster, newsgroup, gigaoctet, forum.
Epson	www.epson.fr	Copyright, webmaster, dpi, dial-up.
Freenet	www.freener.fr/altavista.html	Freenet, on-line, firewall, flame.
Secuser	http://www.secuser.com/dossiers/spamming_mailbombing.htm	Spam, spammer, spamming, firewall, nétiquette, poster, megabyte, mailing list, plug-in, patch, junkmail.
01 Net	http://telecharger.01net.com/windows/Pilotes/joyestick/	Joystick, software, upgrade.
Diaam Info	http://www.sogid.com/javalist/fils2001/environnementpour_tester_servlets.html	Se plugger à, plug-in, connecter, crash, site miroir.
Tactika	http://www.tactika.com/cookie/	Cookie, scrambling.
ASP.FR	http://www.asp-fr.net/20000725.htm	Vaporware, WYSIWIG, drag and drop, copie.
XBOX Forum	http://www.xboxmaniak.com/forum2/viewthread.php?tid=3392	Bug, upgrade, polling, postmaster, software, highlighter.
Brayder Tech	http://www.brayder.com/support/jacksprat/JackSprat%20FR.pdf	Faire un backup, overview, loading.
SIMBA	http://www.somiwofiles.com/decoder/simba202fr.htm	Descrambling, scrambling, scoller
Mégagiciel	http://www.megagiciel.com/131.html	Encryption, sur Internet, URL, cache, cookie
IP Worldcom-Services	http://www.worldcom.ch/web/bridge.html	Bridge, dial-up, email, search, home, timeout
Celius 202	http://www.triangle-fr.com/stereophile-octobre-2001-celius.htm	Article follow-up, check, brainstorming.

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